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(54) Activation mechanism for an optical switch.

(57) An activation mechanism for an optical switch is disclosed. The mechanism is particularly suited for use with switches requiring the movement of a reflecting element into and out of an optical signal path to provide switching. The mechanism consists of a reflecting element (e.g., mirror (14)) and a means (18, 20) (e.g., magnetic, electrostatic, vacuum) for moving the reflecting element into and out of the optical signal path. In the absence of any applied signal, the reflecting element is positioned to intercept an optical signal and redirect it into the chosen output signal path. Upon the application of an external signal, the moving means will create a force of a strength sufficient to move the mirror and allow the optical signal to pass through the switch unobstructed by the reflecting element.

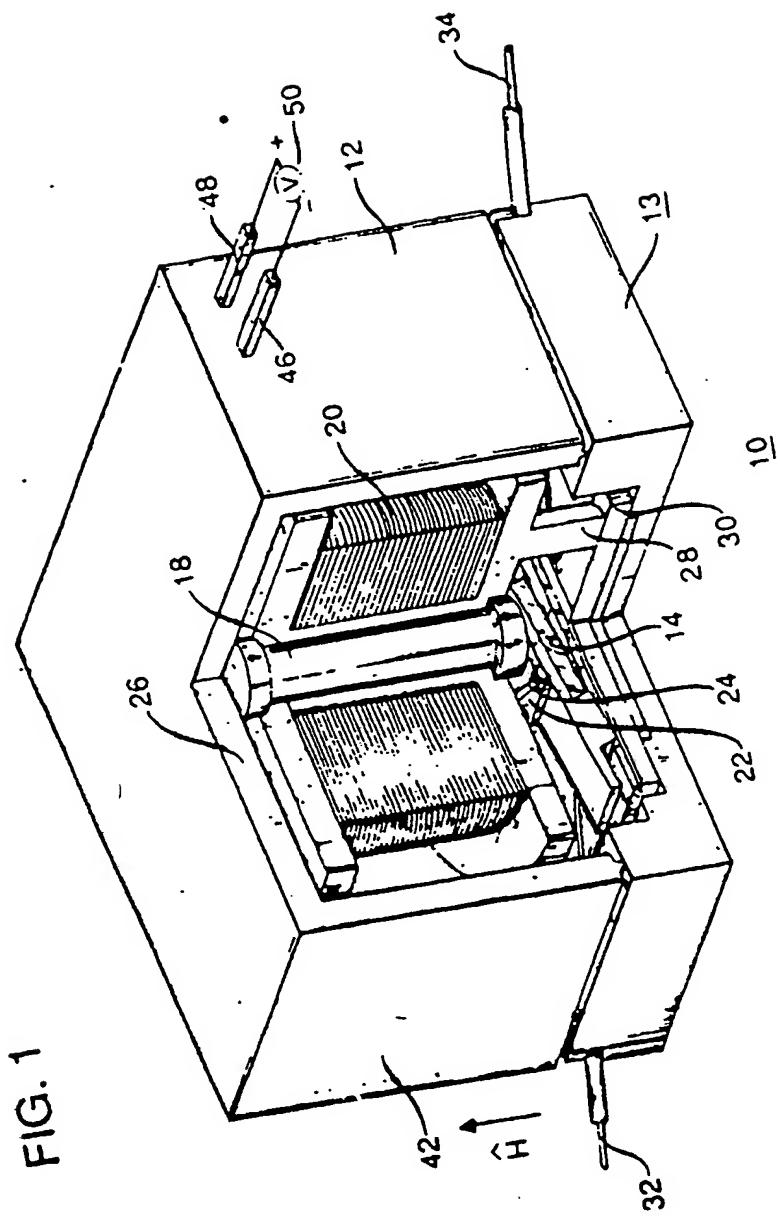
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FIG. 1





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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| DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT | | | | | | | | | |
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| Category | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages | Relevant to claim | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5) | | | | | | |
| X | EP-A-221288 (SOCAPEX) * column 3, line 47 - column 4, line 19 * * abstract; figures 1-5 * * claim 11 * --- | 1, 2, 6 | G02B26/02 | | | | | | |
| A | * claim 11 * | 3, 7 | | | | | | | |
| A | DE-A-3608134 (ANT NACHRICHTENTECHNIK) * column 2, lines 23 - 36 * --- | 1-3 | | | | | | | |
| A | PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 12, no. 388 (P-771)(3235) 17 October 1988, & JP-A-63 131118 (NIPPON TELEGR & TELEPH) 3 June 1988, * the whole document * | 1, 7 | | | | | | | |
| D,A | US-A-4580873 (F.H. LEVINSON) * abstract; figure 1 * --- | / | | | | | | | |
| A | WO-A-8702518 (BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS) * abstract * | 7 | | | | | | | |
| A | IBM TECHNICAL DISCLOSURE BULLETIN, vol. 27, no. 2, July 1984, NEW YORK US pages, 1119 - 1120; M.B. Callaway et al.: "ARRAY LIGHT VALVE SWITCHES INFORMATION SIGNALS BETWEEN FIBER-OPTIC SIGNAL CONDUCTORS" ----- | 7 | TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5) | | | | | | |
| | | | G02B | | | | | | |
| <p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Place of search</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Date of completion of the search</td> <td style="width: 34%;">Examiner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BERLIN</td> <td>08 OCTOBER 1991</td> <td>FUCHS R.</td> </tr> </table> | | | | Place of search | Date of completion of the search | Examiner | BERLIN | 08 OCTOBER 1991 | FUCHS R. |
| Place of search | Date of completion of the search | Examiner | | | | | | | |
| BERLIN | 08 OCTOBER 1991 | FUCHS R. | | | | | | | |
| CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document | | T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application I : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document | | | | | | | |